1. Consider the list of readings assigned for this course. Briefly, summarize 1-2 key insights you gleaned from each cluster of readings (e.g., Digital Literacies in Context, Generating Questions, Instructional Strategies, and Next Steps). How do you see these insights connecting with ideas and experiences shared during the Institute (especially the Keynote and Digging Deeper Sessions)?
   * If you are a graduate student, how do these readings connect to ideas in the literature base with which you are engaged?
   * If you are a classroom teacher, librarian, or youth media specialist, what connections do you see among the readings themselves and to your experiences during the institute or in your own work setting?

### ****Putting Digital Literacy in Context** &** Generating Questions to Energize Digital Inquiry

**Sherry Turkle In *Connected, But Alone?* Sherry Turkle states, “We expect more from technology and less from each other.” She asks her audience to start the process of creating a dialog about where technology is taking us. This is a dialog I often hear played out in my own internal narrative, and sometimes with colleagues, about how I may be harming or helping my own students in the work I’m doing?**

**Certainly, I am a big proponent of what digital literacy can offer, but to barrow from Rushkoff I am also aware that our social engagements around technology can be an act of, “…collectively sharing a moment of not sharing.” This is why it’s important to bring in some process of genuine face to face inquiry. It is important to ask, what skills do I want my students to have in working with myself and one another? What types of electronic use do I want to model for them? How can I engage my students in learning how to ask their own questions about technology use? As Bowker discussed in *Teaching Students to Ask Questions Instead of Answering Them*, there is an importance to taking on this process of inquiry so that students can learn how to “catalyze inquiry” on their own rather than having to rely on instruction.**

**This is a process I try to engage in with my own students and staff and these questions guide many of the decisions I make around instruction. However, after reading both articles on inquiry, I believe more work can be done around how we ask questions. Leaving me with the question, how will I find time to make expand on this process of inquiry; building it into a larger part of my instruction?**

**Thankfully, learning how to work with the digital literacy flower; later incorporated in my dyad, gave me a great place to start. This is the type of real time inquiry that can help to deepen student engagement and bring more meaning to technology use.**

**Lastly, building on this idea of enriching direct collaboration, I really appreciated Bowker’s suggestion of, “practic(ing) silence in class…being comfortable with one or two minutes of silence…while the conversation stalls.” This harkens back to Turkle’s emphasis on our need for solitude, a need that can also be developed within a communal setting; simply through a lack of immediate response. Letting our students sit with their own knowledge; broadening the avenues of discovery. Helping all of us to re-evaluate and expand on our relationships with digital literacies.**

### ****Frameworks and Instructional Strategies for Supporting Digital Literacy****

I really appreciated that all three of these articles provided me with tangible tools, and ideas, I could use. *Energizing Project-Based Inquiry: Middle Grade Students, Read, Write, and Create Videos* helped me to re-envision how my school community could take content learning further through video projects. This was further clarified by the five-phase process (p.485), which provided a series of easy to explain steps. Also, there were some excellent reminders on how to scaffold this information. Reading an article, which outlines a clear process, provides assessment options, and a sample rubric, is extremely helpful.

Also, I appreciate the articles’ emphasis on connecting digital media in the classroom back to students’ everyday lives. This is an important reminder; especially when considering how to integrate electronic mediums. If we are not empowering students to learn, and take digital literacy beyond the classroom, we truly are contributing to the, “new digital divide” creating another missed opportunity for authentic learning.

The *Track* article did a great job of continuing to expand on the idea of authentic learning. I found a number of interesting ideas within the article, but what really pulled it all together for me was the *Sample Activity Types Taxonomy* (pgs. 102-104). It was not so much the arch of how these tools were used, but rather the way the chart was organized. I had a very real, “Ah, ha!” moment in seeing those tables. Just the simplicity and clear options seemed like something I should have generated ages ago for our staff. This would be a larger undertaking; involving looking at our MS & HS curriculum, but one that might really help to scaffold our digital literacy instruction. Also, it’s a great conversation starter with teachers; creating a complex and simplified version. These could then be used in discussing a variety of subjects. They would also work well for our staff members who would like to use a new tool, but don’t know where to start. Also, for those concerned with how electronic tools might fit into their curriculum. For students it’s a great way to remind them of what they have already learned; how to use and incorporate prior knowledge into future work.

*Talking About Reading as Thinking: Modeling the Hidden Complexities of Online Reading Comprehension* provided me with another light bulb moment. In my own work I have followed similar steps, while instructing students, but never with the same amount of depth. I really appreciate this model for online reading instruction. After reading through the article I felt that I understood enough to try this on my own. The four-stage flexible online reading plan also helped me to actively see some of the many pieces my own students struggle with. Using the plan would allow me to tailor a script to meet some of the narrative needs my students are lacking. Of all of these articles, this is the technique that I am most interested to try out. I am aware that it may take me several tries before I am able to conduct a Think-Aloud Lesson properly, but it will be of real benefit; for student and peer instruction, once I learn this skill.

Like most educators, during the school year I find myself working around a constant lack of time. Our teachers are overwhelmed with their increasing roles and responsibilities and navigating conversations about new tools or curriculum can be hard. Sometimes these conversations run the risk of being seen as burdensome rather than supportive. Having clear, easy to access, guidelines, charts, phases, processes, all really help our teachers to feel comfortable with implementing change. I am thankful for the inclusion of these articles as they provided me with so much to work from, in working with my school community, going forward.

### ****Planning Next Steps (Choose one)****

*In Enhancing Teachers’ Take-up of Digital Content: Factors and Design Principles in Technology Adoption* Gaffney does an excellent job looking at what is needed for schools to, “include digital content in their classroom program.” Much of this article is broken down into easy to follow attributes, steps, or charts; making it accessible for a wide variety of audiences. While I might not be able to share the article, in its’ entirety, with my principal and staff, there were many pieces which could easily be lifted in order to explain our school’s greater need for digital content.

It was also interesting to see that much of his research aligned with my own anecdotal observations. For example under *Findings*, “Teachers consider the relevance of digital curriculum resources according to two criteria: the appropriateness of the digital content to the curriculum to be taught; and how the use of a particular curriculum resource aligns with their teaching practice (Cuban 2001).” This is something I have observed with our own faculty. After reading this statement I was curious to see how Gaffney suggested working with this information. I was happy to see that he asked solid follow-up questions about “awareness” and “consensus” These both felt like good places to start from in working with school and individual adoption.

Cost was also noted, but I found this to be of less interest; although equally important, as anyone working in public education knows cost is always an underlying issue. However, I did appreciate the emphasis on reliability and its ties to cost - if teachers cannot rely on digital tools they are also less likely to incorporate them into the curriculum.

Within the article there is a strong emphasis on teachers acting as the “gatekeepers” of implementation. This is something I have experience in my own school, which has prompted on-going external and internal inquiry. I appreciated Gaffney’s research into this subject leading to surmise that time, experience, training, acceptance, and seeing evidence of how their curriculum goals will be met; without having to sacrifice academic quality all attribute to teacher’s willingness to embed digital literacies into the curriculum. These attributes may be used as a jumping off point to discuss the types of specific needs my own staff members face. One avenue of support may be to demonstrate how, “technology can increase the choices of learning pathways available to students.” Many of our students will not receive instruction on how to navigate online tools if instruction is not embedded into the curriculum. Therefore on a fundamental level we have a very real need for this type of instruction. However, as I have observed, and as Gaffney’s notes in his article, this is a system wide issue. I alone cannot embed digital literacy into our curriculum. However, what I can do is take the information gained; in this article, from my previous master’s degree, the Digital Literacy Summer Sessions, colleagues etc., and use it to act as a guide. I can work to share out this information in the hopes of empowering more students, educators, administrators, and governmental leaders with a deeper understanding of digital literacies. Reading this article is another reminder of the bigger systematic picture of how real change occurs; through community. It is the start of a professional journey, which really came into focus during last years’ Summer Session. One I hope will continue with this years’ course, as I work to map out the nuts and bolts of integration within our school community.